

In addition, please amend the application by amending the claims as follows:

1. (canceled)
2. (cancelled)
3. (currently amended) The device of claim 24 wherein said valve body is perforated to facilitate the passage of air there through.
4. (currently amended) The device of claim +24 wherein said opened wine container comprises an opened wine bottle containing liquid wine and an air space there above.
5. (currently amended) The device of claim +24 further comprising an activation lever accessible from outside of said housing for selectively receiving said heavier-than-air inert gas from its pressurized source for delivery to said poppet valve assembly.
6. (currently amended) The device of claim +24 wherein said pressurized source of heavier-than-air inert gas comprises a gas cartridge replaceable within said housing.
7. (currently amended) The device of claim +24 wherein said heavier-than-air inert gas comprises argon.
8. (currently amended) The device of claim +24 wherein said housing further includes a transparent window for viewing said opened wine container there through.
9. (original) The device of claim 6 wherein said gas cartridge is attached to said gas pressure regulator by a threaded safety barrel.
10. (currently amended) The device of claim +24 wherein said poppet valve assembly is mounted on guide pins ~~provided~~ for vertical movement of said poppet valve assembly thereon.
11. (original) The device of claim 10 further comprising springs mounted axially about said guide pins to bias said poppet valve assembly in the direction of said opened wine container.

12. (currently amended) The device of claim ~~124~~ wherein said gas pressure regulator comprises a counter-balanced spring, plenum and flow control needle.
13. (currently amended ) The device of claim ~~124~~ wherein a flexible conduit is provided between said regulator and poppet valve assembly for carrying said heavier-than-air inert gas at a pressure of approximately 15-to-20psi.
14. (cancelled)
15. (currently amended) The device of claim ~~124~~ further comprising poppet exhaust ports for facilitating the exhaust of air from within said opened wine container as said heavier-than-air inert gas is introduced therein.
16. (original) The device of claim 15 wherein said housing is provided with an exhaust vent port for venting air received from said poppet exhaust ports.
17. (original) The device of claim 15 wherein said shuttle is spring biased such that as the heavier-than-air inert gas flow is interrupted and gas pressure is consequently eliminated from said poppet valve assembly, said shuttle is forced against said opening in said opened wine container.
18. (original) The device of claim 17 wherein said shuttle is provided with a gasket for substantially selectively sealing said opening in said opened wine container.
19. (original) The device of claim 18 wherein said check ball substantially prevents backflow of either air or heavier-than-air inert gas.
20. (currently amended) The device of claim ~~124~~ wherein said device further comprises cooling means for controllably heating or cooling said opened wine container.
21. (original) The device of claim 20 wherein said cooling means comprises a thermoelectric cooler.
22. (cancelled)
23. (currently amended) The device of claim ~~225~~ wherein said opened food container contains coffee.
24. (new) A device for storage of an open wine container comprising a housing for receiving said open wine container in a substantially vertical orientation and for

replacing air within the open wine container with a heavier-than-air inert gas, said device comprising a poppet valve assembly including a valve body for insertion within an opening in said open wine container and biased to enable said device to accommodate open wine containers of varying sizes, a pressurized source of heavier-than-air inert gas located within said housing, a regulator for reducing the pressure of said inert gas from a first pressure at said pressurized source of heavier-than-air inert gas to a second pressure that passes through a low pass port within said poppet valve assembly, said poppet valve assembly comprising a valve body, a low pass port, a spring-loaded check ball being spring biased to close said low pass port, a shuttle slidable within said valve body and orifice wherein said spring loaded check ball is biased to close said low pass port to facilitate increasing pressure within said low pass port until said pressure is sufficient to cause said shuttle to rise upwards within said valve body thus being displaced from said open wine container whereupon as said shuttle rises, air contained within said open wine container is freed to exit proximate the bottle top while increasing pressure in said low pass port unseats said check ball from blocking said low pass port within said shuttle for enabling the heavier-than-air inert gas to enter said wine container displacing air that had been in said bottle and upon interrupting the flow of said heavier-than-air inert gas, forcing said shuttle by spring bias against said open wine container sealing said open wine container to substantially prevent said heavier-than-air inert gas from escaping therefrom.

25. (new) A device for storage of an open food container comprising a housing for receiving said open food container in a substantially vertical orientation and for replacing air within the open food container with a heavier-than-air inert gas, said device comprising a poppet valve assembly including a valve body for insertion within an opening in said open food container and biased to enable said device to accommodate open food containers of varying sizes, a pressurized source of heavier-than-air inert gas located within said housing, a regulator for reducing the pressure of said inert gas from a first pressure at said pressurized source of

heavier-than-air inert gas to a second pressure that passes through a low pass port within said poppet valve assembly, said poppet valve assembly comprising a valve body, a low pass port, a spring-loaded check ball being spring biased to close said low pass port, a shuttle slidable within said valve body and orifice wherein said spring loaded check ball is biased to close said low pass port to facilitate increasing pressure within said low pass port until said pressure is sufficient to cause said shuttle to rise upwards within said valve body thus being displaced from said open food container whereupon as said shuttle rises, air contained within said open food container is freed to exit proximate the container top while increasing pressure in said low pass port unseats said check ball from blocking said low pass port within said shuttle enabling the heavier-than-air inert gas to enter said food container displacing air that had been in said open food container and upon interrupting the flow of said heavier-than-air inert gas, forcing said shuttle by spring bias against said open food container sealing said open food container to substantially prevent said heavier-than-air inert gas from escaping therefrom.

Applicant has made a diligent effort to include within the claims the cooperative relationships of the elements as required by the examiner.

In operation, the present invention can best be visualized by reviewing figures 3 and 7 as they pertain to the poppet valve assembly. Specifically, the poppet valve assembly 32 floats in a predetermined range to accept most wine bottle heights. The poppet valve assembly 32 is mounted on guide pins 42 wherein poppet valve body 76 contacts the bottle to perform compensation for varying bottle heights while remaining in contact with the bottle opening as long as the bottle remains within the device. This particular aspect of the invention is shown in Fig. 2. The poppet valve assembly 32 is spring loaded by providing spring 62 essentially about poppet valve guide pins 42.

High pressure gas in the form of an inert gas which is heavier-than-air is stored in replaceable gas cartridge 16 and fed to pressure regulator chamber 92 (Fig. 4.) The gas pressure regulator is composed of counter-balance springs 26, piston 28 and float control needle 30. In providing these elements, the high pressure inert gas is reduced in pressure to approximately 15-20 psi. This low pressure gas exits the regulator section via flexible tube 64 and port 58. This gas is directed to the poppet valve assembly 32 best shown in Fig. 3 which sits atop neck 100 of wine bottle 1.

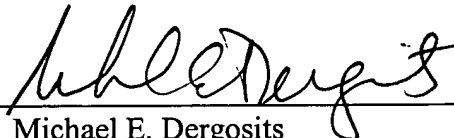
Heavier-than-air inert gas enters poppet valve assembly 32 through low pass port 66. A spring-loaded check ball 36 forces pressure to build in low-pass port 66 forcing shuttle 34 upward whose range of motion is limited by vertical stop 68 while the poppet valve body remains in contact with bottle 1. As the shuttle rises, access to gas exit path 72, best shown in Fig. 7, is provided to enable air contained within the bottle to exit. As the shuttle rises, the pressure in low-pass port 66 increases until check ball 36 is unseated. The heavier-than-air gas then flows by check ball 36 through orifice 70 and is exhausted through nozzle 38. Thus, the heavier-than-air gas enters the bottle to displace the existing air. It is respectfully asserted that this interaction of parts within the poppet assembly is now recited in claims 24 and 25, the only independent claims contained within the present application.

In light of the fact that the Examiner has indicated the allowability of the claims once the claims have been properly amended, it is respectfully asserted that the present application is in condition for allowance and such disposition is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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